

Culver City Democratic Club

Active Democrat



www.CulverCityDemocraticClub.com

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Post Office Box 4254 • 6695 Green Valley Circle Culver City, CA 90230

General Meeting on Zoom — 7p.m. Wednesday, June 14, 2023

Program: reports by delegates from the California Democratic Party Convention

President's Message by Jeff Schwartz

A budget is a statement of values

Dear Members and Supporters,

At the May 8 City Council meeting, a woman stated in her public comment that she had been raped by Barack Obama at the Denny's by the entrance to the 405 South, which was subsequently torn down and replaced by a Chick-Fil-A to cover up the crime. I don't know Obama and will never go to Chick-Fil-A, but I am pretty confident her claim is false. Her suffering, however, is real.

I was watching the meeting online, so I don't know how people reacted in the Council Chambers, but after she finished it seemed the staff member calling the speakers took a deep breath and moved on. What else could she have done?

Sometimes, when a speaker raises an issue in public comment, the Mayor will ask staff to give that person the contact information of a City worker who can help, or the Mayor will ask the speaker to contact them directly so they can assist. The current Mayor consistently makes these interventions on behalf of homeowners and business people. No one responded to this woman's comment. No one had anything to offer her. There was no agency they could refer her to and no process they could expedite.

Our institutions have failed her, as they fail people in psychological distress every day. City leaders will patiently explain that public mental health care is the County's responsibility, and that those services are overwhelmed. This is a valid excuse, but it is not a solution.

What we often call "Los Angeles" is a cluster of municipalities, many of which

choose to provide some of their own services to supplement or replace what the County offers. On the westside, Beverly Hills, Santa Monica, and Culver City all spend heavily to have their own police forces rather than use the Sheriff, Culver City relies on the County library system while Santa Monica and Beverly Hills created their own libraries and West Hollywood and Marina Del Rey use both the Sheriff and the County library. Cities could choose to provide public mental health care and other social services, as they did their own police and libraries, but they seldom have.

Attempts to do so have gone on the back burner. A few years ago Daniel Lee led the Council in funding additional social workers through the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Community Services, but the money went unspent. The project was ignored and the positions were never created, much less filled. In his last weeks on the Council, Alex Fisch proposed and passed the establishment of a third public safety department, parallel to Police and Fire, to deal with social services including housing and mental health. [Its launch has been slow and quiet.](#) More outrage was directed at Yasmine-Imani McMorris for questioning the City Manager about delays in launching the Mobile Crisis Response Team, which the Council created in 2021, than at the delays themselves.

We had nothing for this woman because healthcare is a for-profit business and an employment benefit. Why should someone receive it who can't pay and who hasn't "earned" it?

We had nothing for her because mental health is not seen as healthcare. If she had come to the Council with a broken arm, would they have looked away and waited for her to leave?

We had nothing for her because she is not a "stakeholder." Caring for her problems will not increase the tax base or property values, or earn votes the way making sure potholes are filled, trees trimmed, and permits expedited will.

We do have police. If someone breaks their arm and is screaming in pain, they get the paramedics, but if they are screaming because of a mental health crisis, they get the police. A mental health emergency is often treated not as a medical situation but as a crime.

If she is fortunate, she will suffer quietly and evade official attention for as long as possible while coping with whatever experiences her story about Obama is covering. If she is less fortunate, she will be drawn into the so-called justice system. The LA County Jail holds more people experiencing mental illness than any other facility in the world. During the last election, when the candidates for Sheriff visited this Club, I asked most of them how they planned to run the world's largest psychiatric hospital, and it was clear that none of them had considered that aspect of the job before. We can offer her a stay in County, or several. That is unlikely to help.

It is also possible that she will be killed. You shouldn't need to think very hard to name people killed by police during men-

See BUDGET on page 2

from BUDGET on page 1

tal health crises. LAPD killed Keenan Anderson at Lincoln and Venice January 3. CCPD killed Guillermo Medina at Venice and Cardiff December 18. There are many, many more, [and each year is deadlier](#).

We chose this. We built this system and keep expanding it. Between the time I am writing this in mid-May and when it is published on June 1, the City will pass a new budget giving record funds and authority to the police while grossly underfunding alternative responses and preventative care. How many times have we seen conservatives deny social programs the resources they need to meet their goals and then point to these unmet goals to justify further cuts?

What did that woman need? I imagine it starting with someone coming up to her in the lobby and saying “Are you OK? Do you want to talk to someone?” but that intervention is not currently anyone’s job, and there isn’t anyone for her to talk to. The City could create those positions, but it has chosen not to. The status quo puts low taxes and high property values above human lives.

There are no magic bullets for mental health, and there is a lot we don’t know, but treatment options continue to multiply and improve, from talk therapy to medications. The City offered her none of them, and looked away. Every day we delay the creation of free public social services is a day that we are allowing people to suffer.

Join or Renew Your Culver City Democratic Club Membership!

[To Join the Culver City Democratic Club CLICK HERE for the Club’s ActBlue page.](#)

**Join the Culver City
Democratic Club for
a \$30 donation!**

**For more information on
becoming a member of the
Culver City Democratic Club,
call Diane Rosenberg at
(310) 398-5328.**



ANNOUNCEMENTS

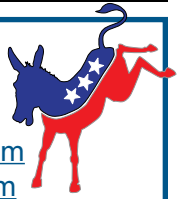
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June 3 • 6 PM

[Culver City Pride Ride](#)

Ride: Syd Kronenthal Park 4PM

Rally: Main St, Culver City 6PM

Village Well Speaker Series for Gun Violence Awareness Month

June 1 • 6PM—Adam Winkler, Gun Law Expert and Author

June 11 • 4PM—Brendan Constantine, poet and Author

June 12 • 7 PM

[Culver City Council Meeting](#)

June 13

[CCUSD School Board Meeting](#)

June 14

Flag Day

June 14

[CCDC General Meeting via Zoom](#)

June 17 • 11 AM-2 PM

Culver City Juneteenth Celebration & Resource Fair

Ivy Station

8840 National Blvd., Culver City

The RSVP link is: <http://bit.ly/JuneteenthCC>

June 18 • 9 AM-4 PM

Supervisor Holly Mitchell’s Annual

[Juneteenth Celebration & Resource Fair & Ciclaviva](#)

(Event is free, but you must register to receive services.)

June 21 • 5:30 PM

[Culver City Council Meeting](#)

Special Meeting—interviews of applicants in consideration of appointment to various commissions, boards, and committees

June 26 • 7 PM

[Culver City Council Meeting](#)

June 27

[CCUSD School Board Meeting](#)

July 2 • 1-4 PM

Independence Day Picnic

Blanco Park, Culver City

July 12

CCDC General Meeting via Zoom

Pictures from the California Democratic Party convention



Culver City School Board Member Stephanie Loreda and Dr. Andrew Murphy, President of Asian Democrats of LA County, with CCDC President Jeff Schwartz

The Progressive Caucus planned to hold their election online using Election Buddy so caucus members who were not able to attend in person could vote. This is a common practice in the Party. In fact, for their own officer elections, the state party held online elections. However, on the Monday prior to the election, the Party Compliance Review Commission heard [a challenge to the plan to vote online brought by David Ross](#) (brother of Chair candidate Shannon Ross) and ruled that the Progressive Caucus vote had to happen in-person only. This did not help Shannon Ross and her slate. An unprecedented turnout resulted in 861 Democrats voting on Saturday and The Troublemakers Slate led by Fatima Iqbal-Zubair won by a landslide. (See picture below of Progressive Caucus voters.)



Leah Pressman noticed that longtime Club member Rick Tuttle was City Controller when the LA Convention Center was built



CCDC members made a special trip downtown to vote for the Troublemakers slate



Jeff Schwartz, Leah Pressman, Representative Barbara Lee, and CCDC First Vice President Jeanna Harris



Leah Pressman, Cassandra Chase (Lakewood City Council), and Brad Carihfield (Bellflower School Board)

The Supreme Court is a bad joke

by *Danny Young*

To say the least, the latest reporting on the impropriety of the Supreme Court has been discouraging. Most recently uncovered by ProPublica is that Clarence Thomas has had high power benefactors and confidants, specifically [a billionaire named Harlan Crow](#) and his associates, showering him lavishly with gifts and vacations in exchange for access and influence over the last 20 years. Doling out trips on super-yachts and private jets, Harlan Crow even purchased Thomas's mother's house to eventually, according to CNN, open the house to the public to "honor" Thomas. In a disturbing onion of psychological analysis I won't fathom, Crow gifted Thomas a 19 thousand dollar Bible belonging to Frederick Douglass. Thomas failed to disclose any of it. Legally, he may have been required to and ethically, it stands to reason he should have. Morally, well, what's that?

I guess what strikes me most about all of this shady behavior is that I kind of just assumed it was already happening. Like a failed relationship, the details sting but they aren't strictly necessary. Do I need to know [who paid off Brett Kavanaugh's 100 thousand dollars worth of "baseball ticket" debt](#) to know he has rich pals who do him favors? Personally I find it kind of funny that he was able to get away with claiming in a reference to his former debauched college years, through tears of hilariously impotent rage, that ["The Devil's Triangle"](#) was a drinking game that he can't remember the rules to. And does anyone really believe that Thomas's deranged conspiracy theory chain letter-forwarding MAGA cultist wife, Ginny, doesn't coordinate with or draw power from his position? Is that really possible? To me it's transparent that these preposterously clad former yuppies, channeling their ecclesiastical forebearers and casting divine curses on us all are simply and obviously corrupt.

What's more important to understand and what I really want to dig into is what their political motivations are and how they make decisions. The new conservative majority court wasted no time in overturning several previously settled laws. Most notably federal abortion protections, turning the decision to regulate abortion back to individual States. Inversely, they de-

cided to remove individual States' abilities to regulate firearms, reserving most of that power for Congress. They also took away constraints on enforcing the separation of church and state, the EPA's right to regulate greenhouse gasses, and tribal sovereignty from the states. You don't have to be an astute political savant to sort of see that gee-whiz there's basically a one-to-one overlap between the court's rulings and the Republican Party platform.

Crucially, six out of nine of the justices are current or former members of The Federalist Society. This is a right-wing libertarian group that promotes an "originalist" interpretation of the Constitution. Originalism meaning, essentially, that the Constitution must be interpreted based on what the people who wrote it believed at the time. Now, for most people this raises a few immediate red flags. Skipping the ones you've already thought of and moving on to one you may have missed—a lot of people wrote the Constitution and they had a lot of different opinions on things. How do you distill their collective knowledge and reveal the genuine meaning? Have we all agreed on the most accurate interpretation of The Bible yet? Furthermore, can a serious originalist tell us what James Madison and Alexander Hamilton thought about AI intrusion into the digital art world? Or even how airplanes should be regulated? How should we determine where to install solar power plants, [Gunning Bedford, Jr. of Delaware](#)? If you're tempted to dig into the Federalist Papers to try and harvest some arcane knowledge about the Constitution and how the framers' ideas could be wrapped around any of modern life's completely alien banalities, I'd say don't. This is not a serious ideology. This is a fake idea wrapped up in the prestige of wealthy law and marketing degrees, designed to appeal to gullible dweebs. The correct response to originalism is "I do not care."

What really grosses me out is the irritating and pedantic "centrist" liberals who hold the Supreme Court up as an Institution™! The holy mages of the court beyond our mortal realm are sublimely interpreting the law free from

the influences of politics. Even if we're dissatisfied with their rulings, to criticize The Institution™ is blasphemy. Of course this sort of deference defines the modern liberal who values credentialism and decorum beyond all ideological commitments. In fact the modern liberal doesn't even believe in ideology. They are fully post-modern creatures. Blank slates who have rendered the world as it truly is, if only you had eyes to see. Justice Sotomayor, one of the liberal justices who admittedly disagrees with Thomas, praised his humanity during remarks at the American Constitution Society, saying he is someone who "literally knows every employee's name, every one of them." Even asks how their family is doing apparently! To me, this is insane. I regard this decorum with contempt. While lanyard clutching accommodationists in the Democratic Party are staring doe-eyed into the sun for some form or process to save us from a reactionary assault on civil liberties from a full third of the Federal government, the right wing is investigating teachers who screen movies with LGBT sub plots and are forcing women to deliver stillborn babies who asphyxiate themselves to death in their first and only hour of life. Good God man, look around! Get a hold of yourselves! What is at stake! Woe to you, you hypocrites! Look upon my work, ye mighty, and despair! I don't know what to say except whatever it takes to knock some sense into you!

In the waning years of the Roman Republic, as [Pompey the Great](#) was conquering Sicily, he was met with complaints by some of the locals saying he wasn't allowed to conquer them due to some ancient law of the Romans. According to Plutarch, to this Pompey said "Will you not give up reading laws to us men girt with swords?" This is the posture of strength required from anyone serious about challenging the right and winning. We are fighting an organized war machine, beating down the doors of democracy with [fascism](#) and playing for keeps—and the Democratic Party simply has no plan to speak of or will to execute. For my part, I am begging regular Democrats and disaffected non-partisans, who I believe in, to start by abandoning The Institution™. I gleefully diminish its legitimacy, and demand that the Executive and Legislative branches overrule or ignore it.

New CCDC t-shirts are here!



We are now accepting orders for Club t-shirts in a new design, refreshed for our 70th anniversary.

Shirts are 100% cotton, union made in Boyle Heights.

They come in small, medium, large, and extra-large and, for the first time, we have Men's (boxy) and Women's (fitted) cuts.

Place your order by donating \$20 (or more!) via [Act Blue](#) and emailing us at CulverCityDemClub@gmail.com your desired size and cut. We will deliver in Culver City and nearby; other orders will be mailed.

We also have a few shirts remaining with the previous design (now known as “heritage” or “throwback”) shown below.



If this gets on the ballot, our schools could become more like Florida's

by Cynthia Hart

Imagine you are walking into the grocery store, minding your own business, when a paid signature-gatherer with a clipboard tells you “This will give California kids a constitutional right to a high-quality public school education.” Sounds great, but wait! Who defines exactly what constitutes “high quality”?

As a sophisticated voter, you don't pick up your pen to sign until you have read the [Petition Summary](#). It goes like this (emphasis added):

“Creates new constitutional right for all public school students in preschool through high school, including charter schools, to a ‘high-quality’ education, the requirements of which will be **defined by the courts**. Allows lawsuits to enjoin or invalidate any law, regulation, policy, or action that allegedly violates this new right. Policies that do not ‘put the interests of students first,’ **which is not defined**, are deemed to violate the new right.”

OPINION

So that's the catch. “High quality” is defined not by educators or by democratically elected school boards or communities or families, but *judges*. What fun could the far right have with that? (For they are wise in the ways of “court shopping.”)

The [full text of the ballot petition](#) is even more interesting. As CCUSD School Board Member Brian Guerrero points out, “There's a lot of coded language in it. It's trying to create an opening to attack teachers and unions, but it is also trying to open space for more charter schools as well as school vouchers that could be used in private schools. You'll also notice that it takes aim at ‘developmentally inappropriate curriculums’, which means they are probably unhappy with including LGBTQ students and families, racial equity, and/or the teaching of a realistic portrayal of US history vs. patriotism propaganda. It's a right-wing grab bag.”



And check out Section 3(d) of the thing. It seems that it would allow a court to order almost any remedy except for new taxes to provide underfunded schools with the resources they would need to provide a high-quality education.

This new campaign seems to be largely a re-tread of [#21-0033](#), that failed to qualify for the 2022 ballot. It appears that at least part of the agenda last time was to attack the teachers' unions. One of the key backers of #21-0033 was a Silicon Valley entrepreneur who had a bee in his bonnet about teacher tenure. He had even underwritten a lawsuit against the California Teachers Association over it.

The official “Fiscal Impact” statement vaguely refers to “Unknown litigation and court costs...”

When the paid signature gatherer approaches me with this one, I will politely decline.

Comments expressed in the newsletter are the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily represent the position of the Culver City Democratic Club

Mother's Day gun safety rally in Culver City

"We organized this event to honor victims of gun violence—to acknowledge that this holiday is so painful for too many. So many mothers and children can't celebrate mother's day together because their families have been torn apart by gun violence.

"It was also meant to raise awareness that there are things we should all be advocating for at federal, state, and local levels."—Megan Oddsen.

At the federal level are three bills which Culver 878 recently asked the city to resolve to support: The Assault Weapons Ban of 2023 (self-explanatory), Ethan's Law (for secure firearm storage) and The Background Check Expansion Act which would require background checks for the sale or transfer of all firearms nationwide.

At the state level they are supporting a slew of bills including SB 368, AB 29, AB 36, AB 667, AB 724, AB 725, AB 818, SB 8, SB 377, SB 452, SB 637, and one that just passed this recently: AB 28 (the gun violence prevention, healing and recovery act).

Locally, the group has advocated for security and permitting requirements for the city's gun retailers which passed unanimously last December. Their current priority is a new slate of proposed ordinances which includes (but is not limited to) liability insurance for gun owners, prohibition of firearms on public property and firearm safe storage requirements for vehicles. To learn more about Culver 878, you can visit their website: Culver878.org.



Come to the...

Culver City Democratic Club Fourth of July Picnic

Blanco Park • 5687 Sawtelle Blvd. • Culver City

July 2, 2023 • 1:00p.m. – 4:00p.m.

The Club supplies the charcoal for the barbecue, watermelon, cups, plates, knives, forks, and spoons, ice, and soft drinks.

It's on July SECOND!



Di's Corner:

by Diane Rosenberg

Update on club member Charlotte Gunter: Finally heard from her. She has been in a rehab hospital recovering. She is doing much better and is looking forward to going home. She still misses everybody.

Read this book before it's banned

by *Cynthia Hart*

"They said what they would do, and we did not listen. Then they did what they said they would do."—Chapter 1 of Christian Nation by Frederic Rich

If the book *Christian Nation*, by Frederic Rich, hasn't been banned yet, it's most likely because few in the red states have read it. The author (like his protagonist) is a lawyer, and in this dystopian tale he shows us step by step how our constitutional democratic republic could become an authoritarian Christian theocracy without changing a word of the constitution. Yes, it could really happen here.

Published ten years ago, the book creates an alternate history in which John McCain wins the Presidency, then dies early in his term and is succeeded by Sarah Palin. All that's required, to end secular democracy in the USA, was consecutive Republican Presidents and Republican control of the Senate, leading to a Republican federal judiciary. As we have all come to understand, the Constitution says whatever the Court claims it says.

This book came to mind for me this Pride Month because one of the very first steps in the fictional democratic de-evolution was to recriminalize the LGBTQ+. This began with laws to "protect the children." Sound familiar?

[Tracktranslegislation.com](https://tracktranslegislation.com) has compiled a list of 413 recent anti-trans bills nationwide. Texas leads the pack, with 58 bills, followed by Missouri, with 40, Oklahoma, with 29, and a total of 17 in either the House of Representatives or the Senate.

But why are transgender folk the target of so much legislative energy? Chase Strangio, the ACLU's Deputy Director for Trans Justice with the LGBT & HIV Project on the [AT LIBERTY PODCAST: Why and How Trans Hate is Spreading](#) answered this way: "You have a huge, well-funded right wing movement that lost at the Supreme Court around marriage equality and very quickly started moving all of these resources into attacking trans people. And they did that for two reasons. One is that many of them are sort of true believers and in one construction of sexuality, gender, and of family, the heterosexual Christian nuclear family is the centerpiece of how

they organize society. And the other is that they had for years been using attacks on gay people getting married as a political tool to mobilize voting bases in the lead-up to elections. And so trans people became the new center point of these attacks beginning in 2016, and of course, stretching back way before that."

So the extreme right just switched scapegoats from gay people to transgender people. Clearly, resistance to attacks against LGBTQ people must be an ongoing part of anti-fascist resistance no matter which letter of the alphabet is the target of the day.

In Frederic Rich's book, California continues to resist and provide sanctuary as

long as possible just as Governor Newsom and our California Legislature are doing for medical refugees from red states in real-life today.

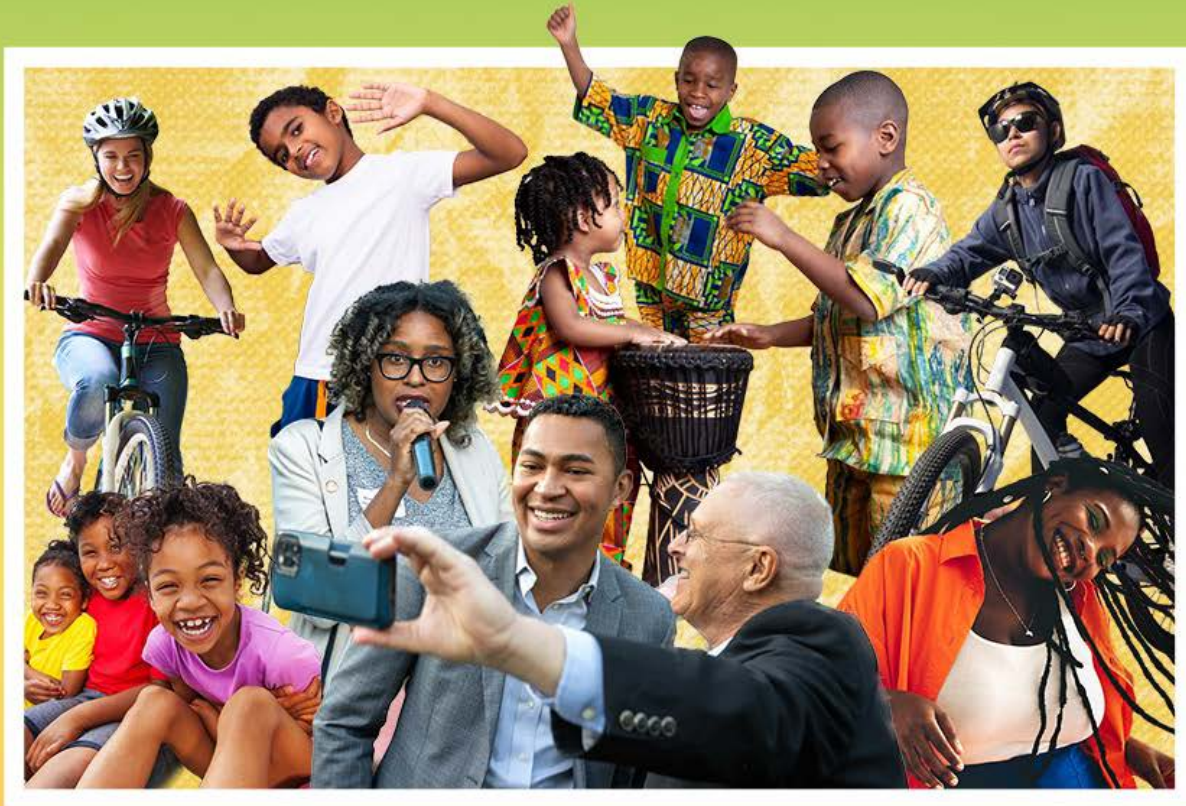
California Resistance!

<https://www.aclu.org/legislative-attacks-on-lgbtq-rights>



[CLICK HERE TO RESERVE A SPOT](#)
[IT'S FREE!](#)

SAVE THE DATE! **SATURDAY, JUNE 17**
IVY STATION, 8840 NATIONAL BLVD, CULVER CITY



JUNETEENTH

CELEBRATION & RESOURCE FAIR

Free Event • Food Truck • Music • Black Business Expo

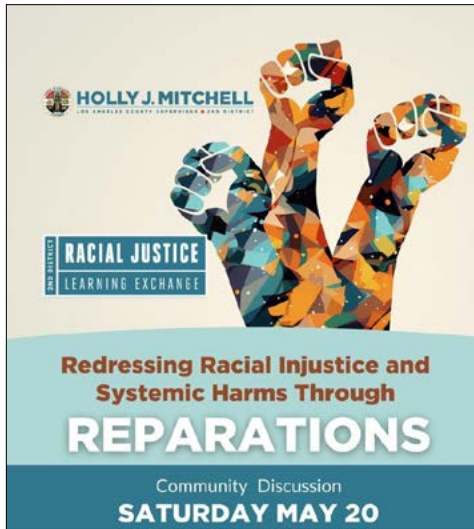


Yasmine
McMORRIN
CULVER CITY VICE MAYOR



Triston
EZIDORE
CULVER CITY SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

Report on the Reparations Task Force learning exchange in Culver City

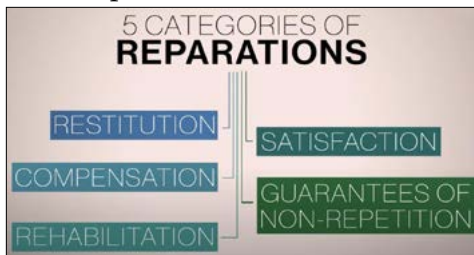


by Leah Pressman

On Saturday, May 20, club members Linda Childs and Leah Pressman attended a [Racial Justice Learning Exchange event](#) hosted by Los Angeles 2nd District County Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell, at the Bioscience Center in Culver City.

The event brought together residents, commissioners and county department leaders to learn about and discuss the work of the California State Reparations Task Force.

After attendees enjoyed a Mexican breakfast and mingled in the courtyard, there was a brief presentation to the entire group on the work of the California State Reparations Task Force, who re-



leased their [report](#) on May 1. The task force's specific recommendations will come out by July 1.

Next, hosts of the podcast [Pay The Tab](#), Adam Radinsky and Tony Tolbert, led a discussion with Dr. D'Artagnan Scorza, Executive Director of the County's Anti-Racism, Diversity and Inclusion Initiative, and Supervisor Mitchell.

Afterwards, participants broke out into small groups. Each group was led by



Dr. D'Artagnan Scorza and 2nd District County Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell

commissioners or county department leaders who invited residents to discuss their personal experiences and who asked questions designed to elicit meaningful feedback as to how best to address the long-term impacts of injustices experienced in our communities.

Linda Childs participated in a group led by Los Angeles County Public Health Director Barbara Ferrer. The discussion in that group centered around healthcare, and how single-payer healthcare should be part of reparations.

Leah Pressman's group was led by two commissioners—one from the Sheriff's Oversight Committee and another from the Probation Oversight Committee. Participants shared personal experiences with incarceration and law enforcement and discussed changes that might address structural harms: requiring police officers to be college-educated, conduct-



ing better psychological pre-employment screening of police officers, getting police out of schools, making police officers and police departments financially responsible for settlements that result from civil rights violations, making mobile crisis response independent of police for mental health crises, and removing police from traffic enforcement. Many of the participants in the small group had police officers in their families and also had suffered civil rights violations at the hands of police.

All of the participants agreed that they would have enjoyed even more time in the discussions. After the discussions, there was a "share-out" and one representative from each group summarized their suggestions to the larger group.



State Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas speaks at the California Democratic Party Convention

One week later, on the 27th, our [State Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas addressed the General Session of the California Democratic Party Convention](#). She called for Democratic leaders to embrace and implement the Reparations Task Force report and for California to lead the nation in confronting the shameful legacy of slavery and Jim Crow. She stood out in not simply celebrating the Party and rallying the audience to fight for its candidates but challenging it to follow through on its platform and be a force for progressive change.

To read more about the State Reparations Task Force and their report see this [Cal Matters article](#), a [PBS news video](#), and [the Task Force website](#).

Note: You need to be signed in to Instagram to access some of the links in this article.



**Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas Reparations Speech
California Democratic Party Convention
Los Angeles—May 27, 2023**

Good Afternoon, Delegates of the California Democratic Party! I'm Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas. Welcome to our Hood – the marvelous 28th District!

I'm honored to address this grand assembly about an issue that weighs heavily on my heart: The need for Reparations and how California will lead the way to finally heal the soul of this nation.

The harms against Black people in this country date back to 1619, when Africans were first brought to America – not as immigrants, but as slaves – against their will.

Unlike no other human experience in America, millions of Black people were ripped from their homeland 5,000 miles away, auctioned off like cattle, kept in terrorizing bondage, and forced to endure genocidal labor under the most inhumane conditions.

An estimated \$20 trillion was amassed on the backs of enslaved labor, making the U.S. the largest economic power in the world. Creating the oldest wage theft claim that has yet to be paid.

While the multi-racial Civil Rights Movement – led by African Americans – demanded that America live up to its proclaimed ideals of democracy, liberty and justice, the truth is that Black people have been enslaved longer than we have been free in this country. And we continue to drown in the disparities created by systemic racism.

In California, disparities between Black and white residents reflect widening gaps in life expectancy, income, home values, educational outcomes and incarceration, and are a testament to governmental policies rooted in anti-Black racism.

Although segregation technically ended under the Civil Rights Act, disproportionate negative conditions persist for Black people in California and across the country in strikingly similar ways. That's not a coincidence—it's systemic.

Let me be clear: Nothing will ever fully repair the horrors of slavery and the ensuing harm done to Black people in this nation.

But reparations is what some have rightly called “the seed capital,” a down payment for the nation we are becoming.

Friends, look around this room. We are the new Moral Majority. Black, LatinX, API, LGBTQ, Jewish, Immigrants, Women. And our first course of business must be to hold our state accountable for the vilest of American atrocities rooted in hate and division. Passing reparations for Black people in California sends a clear message to the U.S. that we reject all atrocities by a government that would allow Black slave children to live in shackles and put Brown children in cages.

Given our multiracial make-up, it makes sense we would be the first state to wrestle with the past and determine how to adequately address why it is critical to recompense Black people.

Our Reparations Task Force must lead the way as a model for other states. What we do here in California to repair the harms of slavery and Jim Crow will be transformative for the country we want to be.

Let's set the record straight: Reparations for Black Americans is not setting a precedent. Many nations across the globe – including the U.S. – have paid reparations for their gross violations of international human rights law.

Our Reparations Task Force is using guidelines set by the United Nations as their standard for addressing reparations under its international humanitarian act.

These standards include an official apology for the harm. And compensation to those harmed.

Reparations is an opportunity for us to stand united for the long overdue justice for Black people.

The Black community has been on the frontlines of ensuring that Americans live up to its creed of democracy. It's time to recognize our sacrifice by repaying this debt and repairing the harm.

The historic and necessary step toward reparations for Black people centers our values as a 21st Century Democratic Party. And where California goes, so does the nation. Reparations means going into an American future where generations can live free from the weight of the bigotry of the past.